

## REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated August 12, 2004. Claims 1 to 20 are in the application, with Claims 1, 16, and 19 being independent. Claims 3, 8 to 12, 17, and 18 have been withdrawn from consideration pursuant to an election of species requirement. Claims 4, 6 to 10, 12, 16 to 18, and 20 have been amended. The specification has been amended to attend to formal matters. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 13, 14, and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 4,274,044 (Barre). In a telephonic interview, the Examiner indicated that Claim 16 was inadvertently omitted from the list of claims rejected under Section 102(b). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

According to one feature of the invention as recited by Claims 1 and 16, a plurality of power conversion devices (or a plurality of DC-DC converters) are individually connected to a single solar cell element for converting an output of the solar cell element.

Barre is not seen to teach or suggest at least the foregoing feature.

It is Applicants' understanding that Barre merely teaches connecting a single DC-DC converter to a single solar cell element 5. See Figs. 1 and 2 of Barre.

Dependent Claims 2, 13, and 14 are also submitted to be patentable because they set forth additional aspects of the present invention and are dependent from the independent claims discussed above. Therefore, separate and individual consideration of each of these dependent claims is respectfully requested.

Claims 4 to 7, 15, 19, and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over

Barre in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,703,555 (Takabayashi). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Submitted herewith is a sworn translation of priority application Japan 2002-340304, filed November 25, 2002. By way of submission of the sworn translation, Takabayashi is unavailable as prior art under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a).

Furthermore, Applicants submit that the invention of the present application and Takabayashi were, at the time the present invention was made, subject to an obligation of assignment to Canon Kabushiki Kaisha. Thus, pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(c), Takabayashi is not applicable prior art against the claims of the present application for purposes of a rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

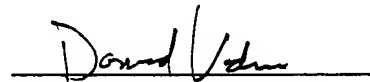
Claim 1 is believed to be generic to the species in non-elected Claims 3, 8 to 12, and 18, and Claim 16 is believed to be generic to the species in Claim 17. Accordingly, examination of Claims 3, 8 to 12, and 18 is respectfully requested once Claim 1 receives an indication of allowability, and examination of Claim 17 is respectfully requested once Claim 16 receives an indication of allowability. See MPEP § 806.04(d).

Included with the Office Action was an initialed copy of sheet 1 of the Form PTO-1449 which accompanied the May 4, 2004 Information Disclosure Statement. However, Applicants note that the PTO-1449 contains two sheets. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner return an initialed copy of sheet 2 of the Form PTO-1449. A copy of sheet 2 is enclosed, for the Examiner's convenience.

No other matters being raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Damond Vadnais", is written over a horizontal line.

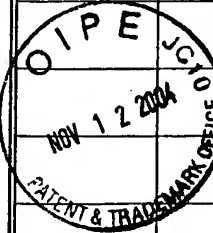
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FORM PTO 1449 (modified) U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE LIST OF REFERENCES CITED BY APPLICANT(S) (Use several sheets if necessary) Date submitted to PTO: May 4, 2004		ATTY DOCKET NO. <b>03500.017725</b>		APPLICATION NO. <b>10/717,641</b>	
		APPLICANT <b>Fumitaka TOYOMURA, et al.</b>			
		FILING DATE <b>November 21, 2003</b>		GROUP <b>3748</b>	

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS							
*EXAMINER INITIAL	DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	NAME	CLASS	SUBCLASS	FILING DATE IF APPROPRIATE	
	6,331,671 B1	12/18/2001	Makita et al.	136	244		
	6,437,235 B1	08/20/2002	Komori et al.	136	251		
	6,657,118 B2	12/02/2003	Toyomura et al.	136	244		
	6,515,215 B1	02/04/2003	Mimura	136	244		
	6,545,211 B1	04/08/2003	Mimura	136	244		
	6,479,744 B1	11/12/2002	Tsuzuki et al.	136	256		
	4,773,944	09/27/1988	Nath et al.	136	249		
	6,184,457 B1	02/06/2001	Tsuzuki et al.	136	256		
	2003/0049881 A1	03/13/2003	Takada et al.	438	62		
	2003/0075211 A1	04/24/2003	Makita et al.	136	244		
	2001/0040453 A1	11/15/2001	Toyomura et al.	324	332		
	2002/0179140 A1	12/05/2002	Toyomura	136	251		
	2003/0062078 A1	04/03/2003	Mimura	136	244		
	2003/0210562 A1	11/13/2003	Takehara et al.	363	24		
	FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS						
	DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	COUNTRY	CLASS	SUBCLASS	TRANSLATION YES/NO/ OR ABSTRACT	
OTHER DOCUMENT(S) (Including Author, Title, Date, Pertinent Pages, Etc.)							
EXAMINER			DATE CONSIDERED				

\*EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609; Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.